

sign is excellent. It embraces the grand ends of human existence, the honour of God and the happiness of men. The means employed for promoting these purposes, also, are such as religion prescribes and experience approves. Ignorance, vice and misery, are links of the same chain. It is, therefore, by a removal of the first, that men cease to become the victims of the last; and these societies are exerting themselves, by a diffusion of the holy principles of the Christian religion, to illuminate the mind and rectify the conduct of men; and by these means, to guide them to happiness pure and eternal: and these principles are the true basis of human felicity; the only principles, which can eradicate the depravity of the mind, harmonize its affections, and by a union of hearts, establish concord and peace in the world. They are the message of Him, who is a light to enlighten the gentiles, and the salvation of God to the ends of the earth; and, sealed by His spirit, all the blessings of religion attend them: As the rain cometh down, and the snow from Heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give feed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Besides, the social union of Christians is the scriptural plan, for giving success to those means which are employed for promoting religion. Of this, Christianity is itself a pattern; and the history of the Church discovers, that the union of the friends of religion, has usually introduced an extensive diffusion of its power. The dispersed of Jacob might in secret mourn over the long desolations; but, gathered from the nations, their prosperity returned, and Jerusalem arose in her walls and bulwarks. The primitive times of the Church, also, are celebrated for affectionate union among the friends of Christ; and not less, for the splendid triumphs of the gospel over the powers of darkness.

As a rational mode of promoting religion, the social plan recommends itself. In the relations and engagements of life, the importance of union is well understood, and every day experienced. For the same reasons, religion enjoins the unity of its friends, and the consolidation of their activity. These add energy to its operations; and produce extensive and permanent effects, at which no insulated acts of beneficence can grasp; they enable

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